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Letter dated 3 April 2001 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo, covering the period 1 February to 28 February 2001.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-28 February 2001) there were approximately 42,500 troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in theatre, with no major changes in deployment since the last report.

Security

2. The overall security situation in Kosovo deteriorated during the reporting period, with an increase in acts of ethnic violence and harassment throughout the province. In two incidents, on 13 and 16 February, near Strpce and Livadice respectively, bus convoys escorted by KFOR carrying Kosovo Serbs were attacked, leaving a total of 8 dead and 45 injured. Subsequently, protests against the attacks took place in the Kosovo Serb areas of Caglavica, Gracanica and Lipljian, which eventually ended peacefully. In Strpce, however, a crowd of about 500 Kosovo Serbs gathered outside the UNMIK police building, blocked two roads and burned two UNMIK police cars. The crowd eventually dispersed after the intervention of KFOR. During the demonstration, a KFOR patrol was shot at while searching an abandoned vehicle, and later detained five Kosovo Albanians.

3. In other demonstrations on 18 February near Livadice and on 21 February in Pasjane, the crowds became violent and threw stones at KFOR soldiers; in the latter case, the crowd was subdued with the help of UNMIK police and five people were detained. Tear gas was used to subdue another hostile crowd demonstrating in Zubin Potok. Following the two attacks on the convoys, KFOR decided to increase security in Kosovo Serb enclaves and when escorting convoys.

4. Demonstrations involving different ethnic communities continued across the province on a daily basis but were for the most part conducted peacefully.

5. In Mitrovica, no significant incidents have been reported since the period of civil unrest noted in the last report came to an end on 1 February. Since then, KFOR has been implementing measures in three phases aimed at increasing confidence and security. In incidents directed against KFOR, a KFOR soldier was hit and injured by a stone on 3 February, and a crowd of 50 Kosovo Albanians threatened to kill two Kosovo Serb interpreters accompanying a KFOR team on 9 February — the interpreters had to be evacuated by KFOR. Four Kosovo Albanians were detained, one of whom was a suspected ethnic Albanian armed group leader and three were suspected of involvement with UCPMB (the "Liberation Army of Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac").

6. Inter-ethnic intimidation continued during the reporting period, and included at least 10 explosions or arson attacks on Kosovo Serb houses and other property, mostly in the area of Vitina, but also in Orahovac and Cernica. In addition, there were several arson, bomb or grenade attacks against Roma houses in Gnjilane and Suva Reka. On 7 February, a Serb church was damaged in an explosion in Multinational Brigade (MNB) (East), and in another incident near the Devic monastery in MNB (North) a KFOR soldier was injured as he tried to defuse an explosive device. On 8 and 15 February in Mahala, Gracko and Decane, there were

three shootings from passing cars resulting in the death of one and injury to two Kosovo Albanians and injury to two Kosovo Serbs.

7. During the period, KFOR troops uncovered and confiscated weapons, ammunition and explosives near Djakovica (MNB (West)), Stirnjle and Zlatare (MNB (East)), and detained three Kosovo Albanians in the Zlatare incident.

Illegal border activity

8. KFOR troops continued to provide appropriate control of Kosovo's internal boundaries and external borders and recognized crossing points. All but two of the recognized crossing points within each MNB into the Ground Safety Zone remain closed.

9. Throughout the period, there have been daily incidents in the Presevo Valley and in the Ground Safety Zone, involving exchanges of fire with small arms and automatic and heavy weapons. There have been numerous reports of groups of armed men in black battle dress moving around in the Ground Safety Zone. On 18 February near Lucane, just outside the Zone, the European Union Monitoring Mission confirmed that a Ministry of Internal Affairs Special Police (MUP) jeep struck a landmine, killing the three occupants. Later two UCPMB members were killed in an exchange of fire. On 22 February, KFOR detained two UCPMB members found shot and injured in the Ground Safety Zone. KFOR continued to make use of the Joint Implementation Commission, set up under the Military Technical Agreement, to encourage the two sides to avoid violence, and continued to interdict suspected ethnic Albanian armed group members crossing from or into the Ground Safety Zone. More than 20 Kosovo Albanians were detained during the reporting period.

10. KFOR continued to take action to prevent the flow of supplies from inside Kosovo, increased its monitoring of the boundary, and refused to allow ethnic Albanian males of military age to cross into the Presevo Valley.

Resolution 1160 (1998)

11. Although KFOR operations continue to result in weapons seizures there have been no reported violations of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998).

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

12. Over the reporting period, there were four reported cases of non-compliance by the Kosovo Protection Corps, mainly relating to the possession of illegal weapons. Thirty-five new members were included in the Corps establishment during the month of February, the total now being 4,663 members, with 144 from ethnic minorities.

13. The engagement of the Kosovo Protection Corps in humanitarian work projects continued, with up to 39,761 person workdays devoted so far to activities such as house repair, road construction, school refurbishment and maintenance, and the development, repair and cleaning of public areas. In addition, the Corps began an environmental project at the end of January to remove abandoned vehicles from streets and public land and had cleared 1,932 vehicles in the space of one month.

14. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Army and security forces remain generally compliant with the terms of the Military Technical Agreement.

Cooperation with international organizations

15. KFOR continues to provide regular assistance on request to international organizations and non-governmental organizations throughout Kosovo on a daily basis, and to provide framework security in support of UNMIK police operations targeting organized crime, prostitution and smuggling. In addition, KFOR troops continue to support safe conditions for minority returns. KFOR is advising and assisting OSCE in its planning for the Kosovo-wide elections.

Return of refugees and displaced persons

16. The number of refugees and displaced persons returning to Kosovo decreased significantly with the onset of winter and following the UNMIK appeal that returns be postponed until the spring of 2001. So far in 2001 there have been 721 returns. In January, there were small-scale returns of Kosovo Serbs to the south and west of the province, to the mixed municipalities of Pristina, Lipljane, Kosovo Polje and Obilic.

Outlook

17. Although the security situation in the province deteriorated during the month of February and the exchanges between the ethnic Albanian armed groups and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia forces increased and became more violent in the Presevo Valley and the Ground Safety Zone, it is expected that the political initiatives being undertaken by the international community will lead to an easing of tension.